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Amendments to the Claims:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (canceled)
2. (currently amended) A cylindrical rotating thickening device ~~in accordance with Claim 1~~ including an axial core,  
a shell having a longitudinal dimension and a  
circumferential dimension,  
means supporting said shell around said axial core,  
a perforated deck surrounding and supported on said shell,  
said deck including a plurality of closely adjacent deck  
segments extending around said shell in its circumferential  
direction, and  
each deck segment including a leading edge and a trailing  
edge, with one edge of one of said deck segments held against  
said shell by the next adjacent edge of a following one of said  
deck segments, wherein said shell has an outer surface including  
a plurality of longitudinally extending spaced apart grooves,  
and wherein said deck further includes  
a bar attached to said leading edge and received in one of  
said shell grooves,  
means for securing said leading edge to said bar, and  
means for securing said bar to said shell.
3. (original) A cylindrical rotating thickening device in  
accordance with Claim 2 wherein said bar is rectangular in cross  
section, and wherein said shell groove is rectangular in cross  
section.
4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A cylindrical rotating thickening device ~~in accordance with Claim 4~~ including an axial core,  
a shell having a longitudinal dimension and a  
circumferential dimension,  
means supporting said shell around said axial core,  
a perforated deck surrounding and supported on said shell,  
said deck including a plurality of closely adjacent deck  
segments extending around said shell in its circumferential  
direction, and  
each deck segment including a leading edge and a trailing  
edge, with one edge of one of said deck segments held against  
said shell by the next adjacent edge of a following one of said  
deck segments, and wherein said leading edge has a lip, and said  
trailing edge is clamped between said leading edge lip and said  
shell.

6. (original) A cylindrical rotating thickening device in accordance with Claim 2 wherein said bar is an integral part of said deck segment leading edge.

7. (original) A cylindrical rotating thickening device in accordance with Claim 2 wherein said means for supporting said shell around said axial core is a plurality of longitudinally extending spaced apart support ribs extending radially from said axial core.

8. (original) A cylindrical rotating thickening device including an axial core,

a plurality of longitudinally extending spaced apart support ribs extending radially from said axial core,

a shell surrounding said support ribs and supported thereon,

said shell having an outer surface including a plurality of longitudinally extending spaced apart grooves, and

a perforated deck surrounding and supported on said shell, said deck including

a plurality of closely adjacent deck segments, each deck segment including a leading edge and a trailing edge, each of said deck segment trailing edges being clamped against said shell by a following deck segment leading edge,

a bar attached to said leading edge and received in said shell groove, said bar being an integral part of said deck segment leading edge, and

means for securing said bar to said shell.

9. (original) A cylindrical rotating thickening device in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said bar is rectangular in cross section, and wherein said shell groove is rectangular in cross section.

10. (original) A cylindrical rotating thickening device in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said leading edge has a lip, and said trailing edge is clamped between said leading edge lip and said shell.